

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE REBUILDING

Property damage or destruction during a major storm can be a devastating experience. People are available, however, to provide you with information on how to safely, soundly, and legally rebuild.

So if rebuilding is in your future after a hurricane or other major storm, be sure to contact appropriate local, state, and federal officials before beginning work. This includes your local Building Inspector; your Conservation Commission if you're in or near a resource area such as a beach, dune, bank, salt marsh or other wetland, etc.; your Board of Health for septic system work; and the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Waterways Program at (617) 292-5695 if you are subject to Chapter 91 regulations. (Chapter 91 governs piers, seawalls, and other structures on the waterfront, as well as development on filled tidelands.) In addition, contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for any work to be conducted in wetlands or below the high tide line.

DEP enforces many of the laws regarding building along the coast and has developed a helpful publication on this topic, called *Protecting Coastal Property from Major Storm Damage: What to Do and Who to Contact Before Building or Rebuilding Near the Coast*. Along with details on who to call before

rebuilding, this publication includes many of the requirements for coastal construction, as well as summaries of the key laws that apply. See [www.mass.gov/czm/protectcoastalproperty.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/czm/protectcoastalproperty.pdf) for a copy. If you don't have Web access, call the CZM information line at (617) 626-1212 and we'll send it to you.

HOMES CAN BE EXTENSIVELY DAMAGED BY STORM WAVES AS WITNESSED ON COVE STREET IN MATTAPOISETT AFTER HURRICANE BOB PASSED BY.



photo courtesy of Jim O'Connell

## SCIENTIST TO STUDY STORM-DAMAGED PROPERTIES

Ocean-front property that has been battered by hurricanes and other storms is often vulnerable to repeat damage. To address this problem, the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) is hiring a scientist to look at properties that have been repeatedly damaged by storms with the goal of reducing such damage in the future. This one-year project will be conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Woods Hole. Repetitively damaged properties along the Massachusetts coast will be catalogued and the patterns of damage will be evaluated, looking at flood zones, erosion rates, landform types, degree of shoreline armaments (groins, jetties, seawalls, revetments), and exposure of the property (open coast vs. areas protected by barrier beaches, etc.). Distinctions will be made between minor, moderate, and major structural damage.

The scientist will document correlations between damage and the potential contributing factors and make recommendations to CZM and the Department of Environmental Protection on the need for policy and regulatory changes. In particular, strategies to balance development with preservation and restoration of resources areas, dissipate storm wave energy, and reduce flooding will be considered.

A team of experts will oversee the project, including Rebecca Haney, CZM's Coastal Geologist and Hazards Coordinator, Rob Thieler from the USGS, Jim O'Connell from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Sea Grant Program and Cape Cod Cooperative Extension, and Richard Zingarelli from the Department of Environmental Management Flood Hazard Mitigation Program.



AFTER THE STORM: DAMAGED PROPERTY IN SCITUATE FOLLOWING A 1991 NORTHEASTER.

photo courtesy of Jim O'Connell